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Licenses Held Up for 10 Czech Papers

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PRAGUE, Oct. 2—Fresh indications of a crackdown on the Czechoslovak press appeared today as the nation's leaders prepared to leave for negotiations in Moscow.

New proscription of the mass media, which until the invasion had enjoyed months of almost total freedom, became known with publication of an official list of newly licensed journals. Of 21 applications, only 11 have so far been approved. The other 10, it was officially stated, "are under consideration."

Most significant of all was the refusal to grant a license to Listy, the renamed organ of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union which replaced the former Literarny Listy, a vociferous supporter of the liberalization movement.

Several of the 11 approved

new journals are of a purely technical nature. A weekly literary paper of the Czechoslovak Socialist Party and another supported by the Catholic Party were granted licenses.

Refusal of a license to publish Listy means that the articulate Writers' union, which since mid-1967 has been in the vanguard of the movement against the Stalinist-type rule of the former President, Antonin Novotny, will be temporarily without a mouthpiece. Earlier, the Union was forced by censorship to abandon plans for bringing out a daily newspaper to be edited by writer Antonin Liehm.

Politika, a weekly review which began as an underground publication, soon after the Aug. 20 Warsaw Pact invasion, is another journal which has fallen foul of the Russian-inspired press restriction. Politika came out into the open

with its fourth and fifth weekly editions, carrying heavy criticisms of Soviet policy and ironic comments on press reaction from Warsaw Pact states.

Although it is officially backed by the Communist Party, it has never tried to pull any punches. Yesterday, the whole of its sixth edition—with a printing said to be over 150,000—was seized, reportedly on orders from Communist Party ideological chief Zdenek Mlynar. Its chief editor, Alois Svoboda, 45, was dismissed from his post and other editors taken in for questioning.

Reporter, the news magazine of the Journalists' Union, which has continued its commentaries on the current situation and the Soviet Union as though press censorship did not exist, is to appear Thursday, but its editors reportedly

are encountering difficulties which could delay or prevent publication.

The view of some Czechoslovak sources is that the current wave of restrictions on the more articulate section of the press may not herald the beginning of an all-out suppression. They see it rather as a temporary measure designed to clear the air for any possible negotiations between Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders.

It is reliably reported that a Czechoslovak delegation is ready to go to Moscow in the near future for an often-postponed summit meeting. Some reports say they will leave Thursday.

Among those taking part, according to reliable sources, will be Alois Indra, favorite son of the Soviets here.